

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-11. (withdrawn)

12. (previously presented) A surgical method for manipulating a graft vessel and a target vessel, comprising:

placing an end of the graft vessel against the side of the target vessel;

inserting an anvil through the side of the target vessel, wherein said anvil includes a channel defined therein;

placing a shield between the end of the graft vessel and the side of the target vessel, wherein said shield is connected to said anvil; and

moving a cutter to incise the target vessel, wherein said shield protects the graft vessel from the cutter, and wherein said cutter is connected to a member movable along at least a portion of said channel.

13-14. (canceled)

15. (original) The method of claim 12, further comprising removing said shield from between the end of the graft vessel and the side of the target vessel, after said moving.

16. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, ~~further comprising deforming~~ wherein at least a part of said shield is deformable, and wherein at least part of said shield is deformed during ~~to~~ facilitate said removing.

17-67. (withdrawn)

68. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein said shield is rotatable relative to said anvil.

69. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein said shield includes an aperture defined therein, said aperture substantially aligned with said channel.

70. (previously presented) The method of claim 69, wherein said aperture receives at least part of said cutter during said moving.

71. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the proximal end of said shield is connected to said anvil, and wherein the distal end of said shield is free.

72. (previously presented) The method of claim 71, further comprising biasing said free end of said shield away from said anvil.

73. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein said inserting and said placing are performed substantially simultaneously.

74. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein said shield is out of contact with said cutter during said moving.

75. (currently amended) A surgical method for manipulating a graft vessel and a target vessel, comprising:

placing an end of the graft vessel against the side of the target vessel;

placing a shield between the end of the graft vessel and the side of the target vessel;

moving a cutter to incise the target vessel, wherein said shield protects the graft vessel from the cutter;

removing said shield from between the end of the graft vessel and the side of the target vessel, after said moving; ~~and deforming~~ wherein at least a part of said shield is deformed during ~~to facilitate~~ said removing.

76. (currently amended) The method of claim 75, further comprising inserting an anvil through the side of the target vessel, wherein said ~~anvil~~ shield is connected to said anvil during said inserting.